

WILSON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY COUNTY CONVENTION

March 30, 2019

The Wilson County Democratic Party Convention was held on March 30, 2019. The meeting was held at the Wilson County Courthouse on Nash Street in Wilson, NC 27893.

OPENING: Chairman Linda Cooper-Suggs called the meeting to Order at 10:11 AM. Sheriff Calvin Woodard offered a message of inspiration and called on the Party to stay unified. God Bless the Democratic Party.

Councilman A.P. Coleman led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Chairman Cooper-Suggs called for Approval of the Agenda as presented. (All attendees were given packets with today's Agenda and minutes from the 2018 Annual County Convention Meeting). A.P. Coleman moved to approve the Agenda as presented, Derrick Creech seconded the motion. The Agenda was approved.

MINUTES: Chairman Suggs called for approval of the 2018 Convention Minutes. A.J. Briggs moved to approve the Minutes. Ann Barnes seconded the Motion The Minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tom Sallenger presented the Treasurer's report for approval A.P. Coleman moved to accept the Treasurer's report. By acclamation by Treasurer's report was accepted.

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNOR JIM HUNT: Chairman Cooper-Suggs introduced the first speaker, former Governor, James B. Hunt. The Governor acknowledged that Wilson County should be proud as we have an excellent Chair of the Democratic Party and Sheriff in attendance. He also acknowledged the other County and City leaders in the room: County Commissioner Rob Boyette; A.P. Coleman (37 yr. Councilman and Past President of NCLM); Councilman Derrick Creech and Congressman G.K. Butterfield. His message was that we should be proud of all of our city, county, state and national leaders. Governor Hunt continued to stress that we as a Party, "get together and sweep the county to register people to vote."

Governor Hunt continued, "Today's speaker is a person who cares and who has always worked to help people. He is a person who believes in people and who works with the people. He knows how important it is to be there for folk and he believes and helps build people up." You should be proud to have this kind of Speaker, Vice Chair of the Democratic Party, Matt Hughes.

SPEAKER MATT HUGHES: Mr. Hughes thanked the Chair for inviting him to be our speaker today. He has served as 2nd Vice Chair of the party since 2017 and was the Chair of the Orange County Democratic Party from 2011 to 2017. He is presently serving on the Hillsborough Board of Commissioners and was recently appointed by Governor Roy Cooper to sit on the NC Human Relations Commission. Having served as Party Chair for 6 years, he recognizes the duties and responsibility of a Chair.

Mr. Hughes acknowledged that as a child he had been a "Smart Start Student." He said "I and millions of democrats have had an opportunity to exceed because of this program started by our own Jim Hunt. Now, I serve on the very same agency board that provided that Smart Start Program for me."

In quoting Governor Hunt, "The people want constructive action, to do business as usual and they deserve no less." He cautioned that we have six (6) high profile races this year. We need to be focused not just on Governor Cooper but other democrats as well so that can help restore balance. Be conscious of the struggle we are having with Medicaid, School Funding, Voting Rights and Redistricting among some of the issues. In this recent election, the GOP of our state has hurt their own base because they forgot about

the people. We must focus on local elections. In the last election, the GOP changed a democratic county to a republican county. We must stay focused.

Be emotionally intelligent, we must listen and be concerned about people. Mr. Hughes highlighted our judiciary: Mike Morgan, Cheri Beasley and Mark Davis. These are the important races on the ballots.

Republican changed rules to protect one of their justices, but Mike Morgan got elected anyway. The rules were changed at least 6 times when Anita Earles ran, but we've been playing by the rules. Republican Paul Newby had a lot of outside money come into the state. McCrory vs. Berger established a Commission overseeing Fracking and put the Committee under the Department of Environmental Equality. Governors took 6-1 majority Opinion, based on separation of power. Justice Newby was the only one to Dissent. He wants to defeat Beasley next year, but with our help, that is not happening.

We need to stay focused. We are a Coalition of imperfect allies. United in keeping our people safe and better educated.

Make no mistake, it is not about Donald Trump. We have to bring people back into the fold, put in people who are solid, State Treasurer, Insurance Commissioner. Get good democrats. Mr. Hughes acknowledged that even though Cal Cunningham could not be here today, his sister and brother-in-law are here. Also please don't forget that Commissioner Wayne Goodwin is also one of the best.

He ended by asking us to stay focused, remembering too many are counting on us. "Again, thank you for having me here today," he said.

GOVERNOR HUNT stood to introduce the Congressman. Hunt stated that we had elected Democrats all across this nation. Speaker Nancy Pelosi's right hand is Congressman G.K. Butterfield. He urged us to be aware of what is going on in history and in our State.

Governor Hunt stated that when he turns on his television to C-Span he sees our Congressman G.K. Butterfield working alongside the Speaker, Nancy Pelosi. "It gives me great pleasure to present Congressman G.K. Butterfield."

CONGRESSMAN G.K. BUTTERFIELD: Congressman Butterfield thanked Chair Linda Cooper-Suggs, The Executive Committee, Precinct Workers and volunteers for their service. He applauded Governor Jim Hunt for his excellent strides in making the Democratic Party in North Carolina what it is today. Some comments from Congressman Butterfield follow.

"He has been a Governor working enthusiastically for all of us. I thank you for the privilege I have for representing you in the U.S. House of Representatives.

When I took the oath for the House. I was the lowest ranked and now I am 89 out of 435 persons. I still have 750k people, and 14 counties. Most influential, I am Chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Chief Deputy Whip/3a Office in the Capitol.

You should be proud to be democrats. It has been the Democratic Party that has fought for civil rights, voting rights and creating a strong middle class, for as long as I can remember and we have been the party supporting universal health care, Medicare and Medicaid."

The Congressman noted that when votes were counted, and Nancy Pelosi became speaker, members of the House were overjoyed. When George W. Bush was President, it was a difficult time. In 2008 Barack Obama became president, In 2010 we took control of the Senate and control of 1600 Pennsylvania and the 1st thing we had to do was stabilize the economy. After that, came Health Care, the Affordable Care Act. Democrats suffered huge republican backlash for that. And at the next election the Tea Party out-worked us. We lost control of the House. Now we have a President of incompetency.

The House recently voted 420-0 to have the Mueller Report released without redaction to congress.

Health Care, – Republicans are trying to repeal Health Care. Senator John McCain voted with us. They are trying to get an individual mandate repealed via a severability clause. Everything must go down. Trumps administration is asking that the entire act be struck down. Twenty one (21) million Americans will lose their health insurance.

Congressman Butterfield warned that the 2020 Budget is out of control and Trump is threatening a shut-down. The Budget is 3.6 trillion dollars out of balance. The Republicans have run up budget and Trump remains defiant about “The Wall.”

So Democrats we must get ready in 2020 to elect more Democrats to office. We have to make some difficult decisions, but we must defeat Trump. We have done it before, and we must do it again. Republicans have 73% of the seats in North Carolina.

Wilson County, we have work to do. I urge you to “Let’s get out and get this done.”

CHAIRMAN SUGGS/CORRESPONDENCE: Correspondence for Senator Milton Fitch was received regretting that he could not be here because of illness. A copy of letter was submitted as an attachment to these Minutes.

REPRESENTATIVE JEAN FARMER-BUTTERFIELD – Correspondence received regretting her not being in attendance as she was at an AARC Convention in Winston-Salem. A copy of the correspondence submitted as an attachment to these Minutes.

CAL CUNNINGHAM (Mike McGuire, In-law) – Mr. McGuire is in attendance on behalf of Cunningham, asks for continued support. Unable to be here, letter submitted for continued support. He now serves as Vice Chair, Governor’s Crime Commission and is a Candidate for N.C. Lieutenant Governor.

WAYNE GOODWIN – Correspondence from Wayne Goodwin. Letter submitted for continued support.

BUSINESS OF THE PARTY:

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Chairman Cooper-Suggs stated that the Nominating Committee had been formed to look throughout Wilson County for officers to serve as Chair, Vice Chairs, Secretary and Treasurer.

SLATE OF NOMINEES: Willie Williams, Chair of the Nominating Committee, submitted the following slate of 2019 Officers to the Attendees:

LINDA COOPER SUGGS, CHAIR

JIM HAWLEY – FIRST VICE CHAIR

ANN BARNES – 2ND VICE CHAIR

WAYNE WILLINGHAM – 3RD VICE

BRENDA AVERY – SECREARY

TOM SALLENGER, TREASURER

Mr. Williams thanked the Nominating Committee for their service.

First Vice Chairman, Jim Hawley, temporarily acting as moderator, asked for other nominations from the floor. Hearing none, A.P. Coleman moved to accept the nominations as presented from the Committee.

Discussion: Asa Gregory asked that each person be vote on separately. It was decided that each person would be voted on individually. Discussion took place regarding the vote for all by acclamation, or by each person.

Mr. Williams made a motion to have the balance of the recommendations accepted by acclamation.

The afore mentioned members of the 2019 Democratic Party were installed by Clerk of Court, Caroline Farris.

ERA AMENDMENT: A Resolution was presented from the Democratic Women of Wilson County to have the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as proposed by Congress, voted on at this Convention be ratified. The signed resolution will be sent to the State Democratic Party from Wilson County.

A Motion was presented by Nancy Hawley, Chair of the Democratic Women of Wilson County to ratify the Amendment.

The Motion was approved unanimously.

DISTRICT DELEGATES: Discussion took place regarding the proper way to vote for persons wanting to serve according to the DP Plan of Organization.

Beverly Boyette made a motion to approve the use of index cards for voting. Randolph Sessoms seconded the motion. By unanimous consent the Motion was approved.

The District 1 Convention will be held on April 27, 2019 at Edgecombe Community College.

A place and time for District 2 Convention has not been scheduled at this time.

ANOUNCEMENTS: On April 13, 2019, there will be a Voter Registration Drive a Mt. Zion Church and will begin 11:00 a.m.

Democratic Women have a contest for picking up the most trash. A prize of \$250.00 would be awarded to the winning group. The Women are also selling Raffle tickets.

STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Election of participants to the State Convention are: Ann Barnes, Dewey Sheffield, Asa Gregory and Zette McArn.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2: Bea Freeman was elected to serve as our representative.

DISTRICT 2: Beth Punte was elected to serve as our representative.

AJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Avery, Secretary
Wilson County Democratic Party